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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A bridge fitting for use in a fluid manifold system and capable of ~~for~~ being assembled in fluid communication with two ~~one~~ or more fluid components, such as valves, regulators, pressure transducers, mass flow controllers, and the like mounted on a support surface, the bridge fitting comprising:

a first fitting in fluid communication with ~~connected to~~ a second fitting, with said ~~connected~~ first and second fittings having an internal fluid passageway therethrough; said internal passageway of said bridge fitting having an inlet end and an outlet end, with said inlet end alignable in fluid communication with an outlet port of ~~a~~ the first fluid component, and said outlet end of said bridge fitting alignable in fluid communication with an inlet port of a second fluid component; wherein said inlet end and said outlet end form planar seal surfaces that are coplanar with respect to each other.

2. (Currently Amended) The bridge fitting of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of metallic seals that can be interposed between and sealing the internal passageway of the bridge fitting with ~~the said ports~~ port of the fluid components ~~component~~.

3. (Original) The bridge fitting of claim 1 wherein the bridge fitting has a U shaped fluid passageway.

4. Canceled.

5. (Currently Amended) A modular fluid manifold for connecting with two ~~one~~ or more surface mount ~~type~~ fluid components each having an inlet port and an outlet port, and a mounting surface for supporting the fluid components thereon, the modular system comprising:

one or more bridge fittings each having an internal fluid passageway therethrough; said internal fluid passageway of said bridge fitting having an inlet end for connecting in fluid communication to an outlet port of the first fluid component, and an outlet end for connecting in fluid

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communication to an inlet port of the second fluid component, whereby said internal fluid passageway of said bridge fitting is in fluid communication with said first and second fluid components when ~~the system is assembled together~~; said inlet end and outlet end of said bridge fitting having a respective planar seal surface, said planar seal surfaces being coplanar with respect to each other.

6. (Original) The modular manifold of claim 5 further comprising: a backing plate for supporting said bridge fittings in a closely spaced manner and mounting said fluid components thereon, wherein said backing plate supports and connects said bridge fittings to said fluid components.

7. (Currently Amended) The modular manifold of claim 6 wherein said backing plate further comprises a groove for insertion of said bridge fittings therein in a closely spaced manner.

8. (Original) The modular manifold of claim 5 further comprising one or more seals for sealing the connection between said ends of the bridge fittings and the ports of the fluid components.

9. (Original) The modular manifold of claim 5 further comprising a locator plate mounted between said fluid components and said backing plate; said locator plate further comprising aligned holes for mounting said fluid components thereon; said locator plate having port holes aligned for receiving said inlet and outlet ends of said bridge fittings therein such that said inlet and outlet ports of said components are in fluid communication with said inlet and outlet ends of said bridge fittings.

10. (Original) The modular manifold of claim 9 wherein a recess for receiving a gasket is provided between the locator plate upper surface and the inlet and outlet ends of said bridge fittings.

11. (Original) The modular manifold of claim 10 wherein said gasket is metal.

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12.-17. Canceled.

18. (New) The modular manifold of claim 5 comprising seals for sealing the fluid communication between said bridge fittings and the ports of the fluid components, said seals comprising an elastomer.

19. (New) The modular manifold of claim 5 comprising seals for sealing the fluid communication between said bridge fittings and the ports of the fluid components, said seals comprising a material selected from the following group: metal, elastomer, plastic, polymer, rubber, nickel.

20. (New) The modular manifold of claim 5 comprising a plate disposed between the fluid components mounted on one surface of the plate and said bridge fittings mounted on an opposite surface of the plate.